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Senate Finance Committee

SB0625: Maryland Medical Assistance Program and Maryland Children's Health Program -
Continuous Eligibility

March 14, 2023

Position: Support

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The Arc Maryland supports SB0625, as we believe it will help to ensure people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who must maintain continued Medicaid eligibility to access their home and community based services, do not have an interruption in their eligibility as the pandemic-era protections come to an end.

As per the Fiscal Note, currently, "all Medicaid and MCHP enrollees are continuously enrolled until after the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency (March 31, 2023). **As per federal guidance, state Medicaid programs must return to normal operations and eligibility redeterminations beginning April 1, 2023.** States may take up to 12 months to initiate eligibility renewals and up to 14 months to complete eligibility renewals. MDH plans to use the full 14 months following April 1, 2023, to complete its redetermination process. Thus, the first round of renewals that may end in disenrollment begins April 1, but individuals will not lose coverage until June 1 after their renewal materials are reviewed and outreach and notice has been sent about the upcoming disenrollment."

We have heard from members of The Arc that the Eligibility Determination Division (EDD) which is responsible for reviewing Medicaid eligibility for people in, or entering into, DDA services, is significantly behind in their reviews. This has been ongoing for the better part of the past 6 months. As the pandemic unwinds and pandemic-era continuous eligibility protections are removed, we are concerned that, without deemed continued eligibility that would be ensured through this bill, people may lose/have an interruption to their Medicaid Home and Community-based services.

We therefore encourage the Committee's favorable report on SB0625.

Sincerely,

Ande Kolp, Executive Director of The Arc Maryland

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